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The Churches of Africa replied that they would obey all the Canons of Nice; but that there was not any such Canon among them as that which he sent! The dispute waxed hot with his two successors, Boniface I. and Celestine; Augustine and the African bishops sent to Constantinople and Alexandria for certified copies of the Canons of Nice, and from both places they got proof that there was no such Canon among the Canons of Nice, as that which the Pope said was among them. Accordingly, St. Augustine and two HUNDRED AND TWENTY bishops of Africa wrote to Pope Celestine that the Council of Nice had passed no such Canon as he said; but "had clearly committed both the clergy of the lower order, and also the bishops themselves to their own metropolitans; and had most prudently and justly provided that all affairs of whatever kind should be finally determined in their own localities, in which they arose;" and they say, "is there any one who could suppose that our God would inspire justice in examination into *any one person whatsoever* (meaning the Pope especially), and yet refuse it to a multitude of prelates collected in council?"\* They, therefore, flatly refused to submit to the Pope's authority, or to let him alter their decisions. They did more—they passed a decree that any clergyman of Africa, who should presume to appeal from the judgment of the Church of Africa to any place beyond the sea† should not be allowed the communion of the Church within Africa. This decree was repeated more than once: we find it in the African code;‡ in a collection of African canons;§ in the second Council of Milevis, in Africa;|| and we find it also in the Canon law, Decret. Gratian. 11, quest. iii., c. 34; and, again, 2, quest. vi., ch. 35, in which last place Gratian adds a note of his own, "unless, perhaps, they should have appealed to the Roman See;" but this exception was added by Gratian 700 years after the Canon was made; and only seems to show his Notion, then, of what the Canon *ought to have been, but, was not.*

If Rome was "mother and mistress" then, this was a flagrant violation of her authority. Any Church that should pass such a Canon *now*, would immediately be condemned at Rome, as cut off from the Catholic Church. Well, then, was the Church of Africa cut off *then*? It is a curious and an interesting question, which we must try to answer. We have an epistle of Pope Boniface II., said to have been written about the year 530, as follows:—

"For Aurelius, formerly bishop of the aforesaid Church of Africa,¶ with his colleagues,\*\* at the instigation of the devil, began, in the times of our predecessors, Boniface (I.) and Celestine, to set himself up against the Roman Church; but Eulalius, now seeing himself cut off from the communion of the Roman Church by the sins of Aurelius, humbly recollected himself, and seeking the peace and communion of the Roman Church, by subscribing together with his colleagues, condemned by apostolic authority all writings which were made against the privileges of the Roman Church, under whatever pretence."††

From this letter it would appear that Aurelius and Augustine, and the other African bishops, with the whole African Church, had been cut off from the Church of Rome, under Pope Celestine—that is, about the year 420; and that the African Church had continued so cut off until the year 530, when Boniface II. was Pope, and Eulalius Primate of Africa—that is, for *one hundred and ten years*—and yet we never find that any one has ventured to say that St. Augustine, and Aurelius, and the African bishops, during that time, were not Catholics!

But Cardinal Baronius, and Cardinal Bellarmine, and Archbishop Binius all say that this letter of Pope Boniface II. is forged; and Binius affirms that Augustine and the African Church were never separated for a single day from the Church of Rome. Now, we are quite ready to admit that that letter of Pope Boniface II., like so many other letters of the Popes of Rome, was a forgery. But, what follows then? No one says that the letter of St. Augustine and the African bishops to Pope Celestine was a forgery. Well, then, it appears confessed, that in those ages a Church might resolve finally to settle all its own affairs within itself, and for that purpose might disown, resist, and defy the authority of the Roman Church, without being thereby separated from the communion of the Catholic or universal Church.

We commend these facts to the consideration of Roman Catholics. Let them discuss and settle with us, *first*, what was the constitution of the Catholic Church in early ages; and then we will go on and discuss with them, which, the Roman Church, or the Church of England and Ireland, has violated that constitution in later times.

Let them remember that the question turns upon this, whether the Roman Church be "mother and mistress of all Churches." If that be true, their creed is right, and we must submit; if that be false, we are not bound to believe a lie.

We ask them to tell us "how old is that doctrine?" We find in the second General Council, which they themselves acknowledge to be a general council, that Jerusalem is the mother of all other Churches.\* Will Roman Catholics now tell us where *they* find that the Roman Church is "the mother and mistress of all Churches?" Let them produce the oldest document in which they find that stated. Bring it forth. Why not? Let all men behold the origin of this doctrine, and see whether it can be traced to anything but the FORGED *decretal epistles* of the Popes!

If it cannot, will Roman Catholics then call on us to believe that to be a part of THE CATHOLIC FAITH, or *necessary to salvation*, which they cannot show to have any other origin than forgery and falsehood?

## Correspondence.

### ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—Catholicity, which is the fourth mark of the true Church, insisted upon by St. Augustine, and is professed in the creed as an essential part of her character, belongs to the Church in communion with the Bishop of Rome, by so unquestionable a title that no heretics (as St. Augustine observes) ever had the confidence to dispute it with her in his time. Nor could any of the present reformed Churches ever get the possession of it, though some of them have endeavoured with their utmost power. For truth and good sense have always prevailed, in spite of all their efforts. Go to what country you please, where there is a mixture of Roman Catholics and Protestants, we are as well known by the name of Catholics as a spade is known by the name of spade. And if a stranger asks a Protestant where the Catholic Church is, he will never direct him to his own

\* "Ecclesie Hierosolymitane, quæ est aliarum omnium mater." Letter of the second General Council (Constantinople) to the Bishop of Rome and the other bishops assembled there.—L. and Coss., vol. ii., p. 965.

Church, but to some Popish chapel. Now, if Papists be truly Catholics, I am sure of two things—1st, that the Church, in communion with the See of Rome, is the Church of Christ, upon earth; and, 2nd, that she is the only true Church upon earth; or else the creed, which describes the true Church of Christ to be one and Catholic, is false. But why cannot the reformed Churches pretend to be Catholics, as well as the Church of Rome?

The answer is plain, because there is a two-fold universality belonging to the Church of Christ—viz., universality of time, and universality of place; and, therefore, no Church can assume to herself the title of Catholic, unless she can show, that the faith she professes, is universal, both as to time and place, which no reformed Church can do.

Here, then, let us consider whether (for example) the faith of the Church of England, as it differs from Popery, can be called universal, either as to time or place. The Church's universality, in respect of place, must, certainly, be understood in a limited sense, or it will follow that Christ never had a Catholic Church upon earth: because there never yet was a time, wherein her communion was so universally received by the whole world, but that great numbers of heretics, and many heathen nations, were out of it. Yet, in Scripture language, she is styled the Church of all nations. Thus, St. Paul says:—"The truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you, as it is in all the world."—Col. i. 5, 6. And so he applies to the Apostles that of the psalmist—"yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."—Rom. x. 18. The Church of Christ is, therefore, called Catholic or universal—1st., because she has been at all times, since the Apostles, the Church of many nations; 2ndly, because she is the great body of Christians, from which all went forth; and, 3rdly, because she either has been, or will be in every nation before the end of the world; that so all nations may be blessed in the seed of Abraham, according to God's promise.—Gen. xxii. 17, 18.

This is the true meaning of the Church's universality, in respect of place. But her universality in respect of time is without limitation—that is, it suffices not that she be the Church of many ages, but it imports that she be the Church of all ages, since the time of the Apostles, and derived originally from them, both as to her faith and communion. Whence it follows, that Catholics, truly so called, are the standing body of Christians, throughout all ages, from which all societies of heretics and schismatics have been cut off, as so many branches from the body of a tree, which continues standing and growing, whatever branches are lopped from it.

Now, let us see whether the reformed Church of England can make good her universality, either of time or place. Is she in the communion of that great body of Christians, from which all heretics and schismatics went forth, ever since the time of the Apostles? Alas! she herself broke off from it a little before the middle of the sixteenth century. Can she be styled the Church of all nations?

She who, three hundred years ago, was not the Church of any one nation in the world! Has her faith, contained in the thirty-nine articles, been preached in France, Spain, Italy, Greece, &c., &c., or any other nation under the sun, but what belongs to the crown of Great Britain? No man is so weak as to say it has. It is, then, a plain case she has no universality of place, even in the limited sense in which I have explained it.

Again, as to what we call universality of time (which, as I have remarked, comprehends all ages, from the Apostles down to us), she may as well pretend to have received the system of her whole faith and religion, by a continued succession of pastors, from Noah as from the Apostles. For how is it possible she could receive it from the Apostles, when Popery was in possession of the whole kingdom, for nine hundred years before the Reformation? And the book of Homilies declares, that all Christendom was drowned in Popery during all that space of time. Where, then, was that faith of the reformed Church of England in all those ages? By what external body, or society of men was it possessed? Finally, where was her succession of Protestant bishops for so many hundred years before the Protestant religion had a being? Was she a Christian Church, and yet in part of Christendom? For I am sure in Christendom she could not be, because all Christendom was overrun with Popery, even our enemies being judges. The plain truth, then, of the matter is, that she had no being at all before the sixteenth century; and she wants about one thousand five hundred years of universality of time. So that in effect Protestants may as well style themselves antediluvians as call themselves Catholics.

From what has been said it follows very plainly, that the Church in communion with the See of Rome is the Church of Christ, the only true Church. For the Catholic Church cannot but be the true Church; and if she be the true Church, there can be no other true one.—See Ephes. iv. 4, 5.

"Thus one, thus pure, behold her largely spread,  
Like the fair ocean, from her mother-bed;  
From east to west, triumphantly she rides,  
All shores are watered by her wealthy tides.

"As undivided, so from errors free;  
As one in faith, so one in sanctity:  
Thus, she, and none but she, the insulting rage  
Of heretics opposed, from age to age."

St. Cyprian says, "there is one God, and one Christ, and one Church, and one chair, by our Lord's voice founded upon

\* Labbe and Coss. vol. ii. p. 1675. Ed. Paris, 1672.

† N.B.—The Pope, with whom their dispute was, lay just across the sea from Africa.

‡ Ad transmarina autem qui putaverit appellandum, a nullo intra Africanam in communionem suscipiatur. Codex canonum Afric. Can. 125, Labbe and Coss., vol. ii., p. 1,120. Ed., Paris, A.D. 1672.

§ P. 1,667, Can. 92.

|| P. 1,542, Can. 22.

¶ This Aurelius was Bishop of Carthage and Primate of Africa, at the time when the letter of the African bishops, above mentioned, was written to Pope Celestine.

\*\* St. Augustine was one of these colleagues, "instigated by the devil."

†† Aurelius enim præfatus Carthaginensis ecclesiæ olim episcopus, cum collegis suis (instigante diabolo) superbire temporibus prædecessorum nostrorum Bonifacii et Celestini Romanam ecclesiam cepit; sed videns se modo peccatis Aurelii Eulalii a Romanæ ecclesiæ communione segregatum, humiliter recognovit se pacem et communionem Romanæ ecclesiæ petens, subscribens una cum collegis suis, damnavit apostolica auctoritate omnes scripturas quæ adversus Romanæ ecclesiæ privilegia factæ quogue ingenio fuerunt.—Bon. Pap. II., Ep. I., L. and Coss., vol. iv., p. 1,684, Paris, 1672.

Peter. Another altar to be set up, or a priesthood to be made, besides one altar and one priesthood is impossible. Whosoever gathereth elsewhere scattereth. It is adulterous, it is impious, it is sacrilegious, whatsoever is instituted by man's fury to the breach of God's divine disposition. Get ye far from the contagion of such men, and fly from their speeches as a cancer and a pestilence, &c."—Lib. de unit. Eccles. nu. 5. Whereby we learn that this unity of the Church, commended so much unto us, consists in the mutual fellowship of all bishops with the See of St. Peter.

Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM ROURKE.

We come now to consider the four notes of the Church which Mr. Rourke adopts from St. Augustine. We might remark that St. Augustine only uses them as *presumptions*, acknowledging that any argument founded on them would be overthrown if there were plain Scriptural evidence on the other side;\* but we think it of far more importance to hasten on to the discussion—are these good marks of the Church or not?—than to spend time in disputing as to St. Augustine's opinion on the matter. No one would be more shocked than the good saint himself if any were to maintain that every argument, thrown out by him in the heat of controversy, was to be accepted as valid and not to be contradicted. None knew better than St. Augustine how to distinguish between the unhesitating reverence with which the dictates of inspiration are to be submitted to, and the wise discrimination with which we are to receive the teaching of the best of fallible men. "We ought not," says he, "to esteem the statements of any persons, however Catholic and of whatever repute, as the canonical Scriptures; so that it may not be lawful for us, without infringing on the honour due to these men, to blame or reject this or that in their writings if perchance we shall have found that they have been of a different opinion from what truth requires—truth, as understood by divine aid, either by others or by ourselves. Such is my feeling when reading the writings of others, and such I wish to be the views of others when considering the meaning of mine."† We need, then, no other authority for passing on at once to discuss each of Mr. Rourke's four notes on their own merits, to examine as to each of them, is it a good mark of the Church, and does the Church of Rome possess it.

His first mark is "the agreement of people and nations." Now, we beg to refer Mr. Rourke to an article in our last volume, p. 40, "Are numbers a test of truth?" in which we have considered whether this is a good mark or not. We shall only repeat thus much of what we there said—"The religion which God gave the Jews was certainly true; yet, the professors of it were always a very small minority of the inhabitants of the earth. No nation, in short, agreed with them. For many hundreds of years the Christians were a minority in every nation of the world into which Christianity had spread. Christianity grew and converted so many nations, by despising, denying, and refuting this argument of numbers as a test of religious truth." We then ended our article by saying, that "we distrusted this argument from numbers because we know it cannot stand in the judgment hereafter; and no argument can be worth anything now which cannot prevail then. Suppose any poor mortal should then presume to say to the Great Judge, 'I always tried to be of the religion of the majority,' will not Christ say to him, 'I gave you this warning from the beginning, and if you had searched the Scripture you would have found it—Enter ye in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it.—Matthew vii., 13, 14.—Douay Bible.

But, if the consent of nations be a good argument it will certainly never benefit the cause of the Church of Rome. We were amused at the desperate ingenuity with which Mr. Rourke attempted to bring this argument to bear. He leaves heathen nations and Russia out of count altogether, and then he counts as consenting with the Church of Rome every nation which had at any time been in communion with her, even though their consent with her may not have existed since the ninth century; or, in other words, though they may have dissented from her a greater number of centuries than they have agreed with her.

Put special pleading out of the case, and is it not a plain matter of fact that there is not a general agreement of nations with the Church of Rome: some of the largest and most powerful, and some of the most intelligent nations of Christendom dissent from her communion. We need only mention England, America, Australia, Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Saxony, part of Switzerland, &c., &c. If, then, the agreement of nations be a note of the true Church, we need not discuss whether the Church of Rome ever had this note, for, certainly, she has lost it now.

\* See our leading article for July, 1853, vol. II., p. 79, where our readers will find that, in his great controversy with the Donatists, St. Augustine gave up the argument from the use of the name Catholic, and decided the question, which is the Catholic Church, wholly by Scripture proofs.

† Neque enim quorumlibet disputationes, quamvis Catholicorum et laudatorum hominum, velut Scripturas canonice habere debemus, ut nobis non liceat sive honorificetis, que illa debetur hominibus, aliquid in eorum scriptis improbare atque resovere si forte invenimus quod aliter sentiant quam veritas habet, divinam adiutorio vel ab illis intellecta vel a nobis. Talis ego sum in scriptis aliorum, tales volo esse intellectores meorum.—Ad. Fortun., ep. 118, c. iv., tom. ii., p. 502.

Mr. Rourke's second note is "the evidence of miracles." He is prudently very brief on this head. His difficulty plainly is, that while his Church claims, in general terms, the possession of miraculous powers, she is too wise to pledge herself absolutely to the truth of any particular miraculous stories; and the very same tales are devoutly believed in by one set of Roman Catholics, laughed at by another set, equally orthodox, while a third set—the least respectable of all—repeat them without believing them, and say, that if these particular miracles did not take place, no doubt others did. We believe that Mr. Rourke is a little too intelligent to receive the stories of winking pictures, &c., which Roman Catholic newspapers circulate for the amusement of the vulgar, and we can, therefore, easily understand why he talks of the "evidence of miracles" in general terms, but carefully abstains from going into particulars.

His third head is the "succession of bishops." If this be a good note of the Church, the Church of Rome in those kingdoms certainly cannot lay claim to it. We have treated of this subject in a separate article in our last number; we shall therefore merely say here, that at the time of the Reformation, the majority of the Irish bishops retained their sees and handed them down in regular order to their legitimate successors—the present bishops of the Church of England and Ireland—whereas, if you were to ask one of the Roman Catholic bishops to show you his list of his predecessors you would, in all probability, find a great gap of a hundred years or so in the middle, a considerable time having elapsed in most of the Irish sees before any foreigner attempted to dispute possession with the lawful successors of the old Irish bishops. And in England the very names of the sees claimed by the Roman Catholic bishops remind us that they are new things founded within the last half-dozen years, and that those bishops cannot even pretend to be the successors of the early occupants of the sees of Canterbury and York and the other ancient sees of England.

Mr. Rourke's last note is the name, "Catholic." He says, "if a stranger ask a Protestant where the Catholic Church is, he will never direct him to his own Church but to some Popish chapel." We have always thought that as good an answer as this argument deserves is to retort it on himself—"if a stranger ask a Roman Catholic in this country where 'the Church' is, he will never direct him to a Popish chapel, but to the nearest Church of England place of worship." Is it not plain, then, by their own acknowledgement, that the Roman Catholics do not belong to the true Church of Ireland." The argument is just as good on the one side as on the other. But, in point of fact, what is really worth attending to is not what names things are in the habit of being called, but what they have a right to be called. The whole foundation of Mr. Rourke's argument arises out of a general unwillingness among Protestants to quarrel about words or names, and an anxiety not to give offence to their neighbours. If we give the name of "Papists" to those who acknowledge the Pope as the head of their Church, they cry out—we do not know why—that we wound their feelings, and mean to insult them; and if we call those Romanists who pride themselves on their union to Rome, ten to one they call this name insulting also. Well, then, if any Protestants, either from thoughtlessness or from kindness and good nature, give them the name of Catholics, they turn round and say—"There, now, you recognise that we are the Catholics, it is plain that you are the heretics!" Is not this a poor return to Protestants for their unwillingness to offend them? Is it not a meanly and generous mode of arguing?

Whatever be the force of Mr. Rourke's argument, it has none against us. He could never have taken up our periodical without seeing that we bore on our front the title of Catholic, in which the Church to which we belong has always claimed her share. We have never pushed our good nature so far as to allow our opponents to use the name as a distinctive title for themselves. They must see that it is not we who are insulting them by refusing them the exclusive use of this title, but they who are insulting us by denying us our share in it. When we have had occasion to speak of them, we generally have chosen Roman Catholics as the least offensive name consistent with truth. And this name serves well enough to distinguish the Irish Catholics, whose bishops are the successors of St. Patrick and his fellow-labourers, from the Roman Catholics, whose bishops were introduced into this country by the bishops of Rome a couple of hundred years ago.

It now only remains to say something as to the two-fold universality of time and place which he says the Church must possess. The Church's universality in point of place must, he says, be understood in a limited sense. Certainly, if the Church of Rome be exclusively the Church, it must be understood in a very limited sense indeed. That Church is barely holding its ground in the old countries of the world, while in the vast emigration that is going on she is left immeasurably behind, and the new countries of the world are filling fast with a population which refuses to submit to her. Test by this mark, and then say which is the right notion of the Catholic Church—Mr. Rourke's notion, which limits the name to less than the half of Christendom, or ours, which embraces every Church in the world which retains the old faith embodied in the creeds which the ancient Church handed down to us.

As to universality in point of time, one would think Mr. Rourke had never looked into the Thirty-nine Articles,

and that he imagined that the Church of England taught some new religion invented three hundred years ago. Why, he believes many of the Thirty-nine Articles himself without knowing it. Every one of the doctrines contained in the creeds of the Church of England (such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption of the world by our Saviour, the gift of the Holy Ghost) is universal in point of time. There is no dispute about it; the Church of Rome confesses it as well as ourselves. The dispute is as to the new articles of Pope Pius's creed. We call for proofs that these are universal in point of time. Let any one show that the ancient Church worshipped images, had communion in one kind, prayed to the saints, and so forth. Thus we have tried the Church of Rome by Mr. Rourke's own tests, and found her wanting. We reject her because her creed is not universal in point of time, and her communion is not universal in point of place.

## RELICS OF SAINTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—Your strictures on the inscriptions found on the tombs of the apocryphal saints, Philomena, Theodosia, and Ursinus, remind me of another inscription, that of St. Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins, whose remains are to be seen to this day preserved in glass-cases all round one of the Churches at Cologne, and which may be new to some of your readers. The inscription appears to have been somewhat obliterated by age, as antiquarians were divided in opinion about it. Some say that it was "St. Ursula, et XI.M.V.—i.e., et 11 Martyres Virgines," (eleven virgin martyrs), which, through ignorance, or wilful deceit, has been converted into undecim millia virgines—11,000 virgins. Other antiquarians say, that the inscription meant "SS. Ursula et Undecimilla martyres virgines," and that Undecimilla, which was the proper name of a virgin martyr, was mistaken, by some ignorant copyist, for an abbreviation of undecim millia, 11,000. What a slight foundation serves for a pious legend in the Church of Rome! which, in the course of a few centuries, takes a tangible and visible form, as in this case, where cart-loads of bones, removed, no doubt, from some neighbouring church-yard, are enshrined in glass-cases round a Church, in the 16th century, as the bones of *eleven thousand virgins!*

The legend told of them is, I believe, as follows:—That an English chief, after conquering and taking possession of Lower Brittany, returned to his native land in search of wives for his army and himself. He married Ursula, an English Princess, and took eleven thousand maidens as brides for his companions in arms. Ursula whilst journeying with this bridal train to join her husband was driven by a storm into the mouth of the Rhine, and arrived, somewhat oddly, at Cologne. They were there beset by a party of Huns, who murdered them all. Their bodies were discovered at Cologne in the 16th century; and the remains of SS. Ursula, which were at first mixed with those of her companions, were pointed out by a miracle for the special veneration of the faithful. Cologne is not without a rival, however, in claiming the bones of St. Ursula, for it is said that she has a whole body also at St. Jean d'Angely, besides three separate limbs and various fragments at Mans, Tours, and Bergerat. Several of her virgins also are said to have relics in various parts of Europe, and are distinguished by their proper names, as St. Ottilia, St. Fleurina, &c.

As you seem to like short letters, perhaps you may wish to encourage them by inserting this.

Your obedient servant,

VIATOR.

We feel obliged to "Viator" for his letter, which is nothing the worse for being short. We have, ourselves, seen the glass-cases of bones in the Church of St. Ursula, at Cologne, which were disgusting and dismal enough, though we were unable to discover any one who believed in them. We suppose, however, there must be still some such persons, or probably the collection would be removed to some more decent cemetery. We confess we dislike converting a Church into a charnel-house, even were it certain that all the bones belonged to unfortunate young ladies going to be married, and butchered in barbarous times by the Huns. What must have been the darkness of the sixteenth century when such wholesale disinterments could be recognized and approved of by any Church? Cart-loads of bones, taken at random from a grave-yard, and enshrined in glass-cases for the worship of the faithful. Surely the Reformation did not begin too soon!

## FLOWERS FOR SEPTEMBER.

THE flowers are gradually passing away; the sober tints of autumn succeed the gay and sprightly hues of spring and summer; brown leaves rustle where brilliant flowers lately blossomed, and though some few remain as bright as ever, yet, one by one, they are going, marking, with solemn emphasis, the sure and steady advance of winter. Such is the course of human life, passing from the joyous spring-time of youth, into the short summer season of manhood, and, then, rapidly falling into "the sear and yellow leaf" that withers, drops, and is swept away by the blast of winter. The decline of summer, and the shortening of the days—of our own few days—should be watched with a feeling of something more than melancholy, were it not that there is a germ of immortal life wrapt up in our